

REMARKS

The Office Action dated June 2, 2008, has been received and carefully noted. The above amendments and the following remarks are being submitted as a full and complete response thereto. Claims 1-20 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1 and 15 are amended. Support for the subject matter of the amendment to claims 1 and 15 can be found in the Specification at, for example, paragraph [0047]. No new matter has been added. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-20 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Ikeda et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,788,683) in view of Yoshizawa et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,944,169). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

In particular, the above-identified application claims a method for transmitting data in an IP network according to a source and destination flow table, a flow key, and one or more variables, the method including at least receiving a data transmission in an IP network, extracting at least one field, forming a combined source/destination address entry based on the extracted at least one field, and determining a most granular bit-value mask corresponding to the combined source/destination address entry from a mask table having a plurality of bit-value masks by performing a logical AND operation on bits in the network, as recited in amended claim 1, and similarly recited in amended claim 15.

Ikeda teaches a flow identification device that includes a retrieval flag table 3, a mask section 4, and a flow retrieval table 5 formed of a content-addressable memory (Abstract). Ikeda also teaches that a retrieval flag is formed of various respective fields, and one of those fields is formed of three bits indicating that "SPORT" and "DPORT" are valid or invalid in the header (column 7, lines 65-67), and that in each of the remaining fields in the header, valid or invalid is represented in a bit value (column 8, lines 1-2).

However, Ikeda fails to disclose or suggest that determining whether the respective fields are valid or invalid is done by performing a logical AND operation on bits in the network, as recited in amended claims 1 and 15. Accordingly, Ikeda fails to disclose or suggest all the features of independent claims 1 and 15.

Furthermore, the Office Action admits that Ikeda fails to disclose or suggest forming a combined source/destination address entry based on the extracted at least one field, and the plurality of bit value masks include a plurality of granularities corresponding to each of the fields in the header (Office Action, page 4, lines 6-10; page 8, lines 4-8), and relies on Yoshizawa to cure these deficiencies. However, the Office Action is mistaken for the following reasons.

Yoshizawa teaches a network system that includes a network of data sources interconnecting plural clients by way of plural network devices (Abstract). Yoshizawa further teaches that a flow control table 227 includes entries 1, 2, 3, ... N, and each entry comprises a flow field 310, an action field 320, a flag field 330, and a new-action field 340 (column 6, lines 55-61; Figure 3). Yoshizawa indicates that the Flow field 310 comprises a source address sub-field 312 and a corresponding destination address sub-field 314 (column 6, lines 61-63), which the Office Action appears to associate to the claimed combined source/destination address entry from a masked table having a plurality of bit value masks (Office Action, page 4, lines 11-13). However, Yoshizawa teaches a flow field that comprises a source address sub-field and a corresponding destination address sub-field, and does not teach a plurality of bit-value masks that include a plurality of granularities that correspond to each of the plurality of fields in the header. Furthermore, Yoshizawa fails to disclose or suggest determining a most granular bit-value mask by performing a logical AND operation on bits in the network, as recited in amended claims 1

and 15. Thus, Yoshizawa fails to cure the above-discussed deficiencies in Ikeda in disclosing or rendering obvious the features of amended claims 1 and 15.

For at least the reasons above, a combination of Ikeda and Yoshizawa fails to arrive at the subject matter of amended claims 1 and 15. Thus, amended claims 1 and 15 are patentable over a combination of Ikeda and Yoshizawa. Furthermore, claims 2-14 and 16-20, at least for their dependence on patentable claims 1 and 15, and for their added features, are also patentable over a combination of Ikeda and Yoshizawa. Thus, all of the pending claims 1-20 are patentable over the applied references, and withdrawal of the rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner determine that any further action is necessary to place this application into better form for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned representative at the number listed below.

In the event this paper is not considered to be timely filed, the Applicants hereby petition for an appropriate extension of time. Any fees for such an extension, together with any additional fees that may be due with respect to this paper, may be charged to counsel's Deposit Account No. 01-2300, referencing Attorney Dkt. No. **026215-00006**.

Respectfully submitted,



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